

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 166400

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DRAFTED BY NEA:AGRIFFIN:BH

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 166400

EXDIS

FOL REPEAT STATE 166400 SENT ACTION JIDDA INFO BEIRUT
JULY 3

QTE

S E C R E T STATE 166400

EXDIS, FOR AMBS. PORTER AND SEELYE FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: APER, PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: OFFICER IN EAST BEIRUT

REF: (A) JIDDA 4634

1. FOR AMBASSADOR PORTER: I VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR
MAKING MURPHY AVAILABLE, AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO UNDERTAKE
THE MISSION. WE HAVE, HOWEVER, BEEN COMPELLED TO RECON-
SIDER OUR PLANS SINCE WE RECOGNIZE THAT IT WILL NOW BE FAR
MORE DIFFICULT TO COPE WITH THE ALLEGATIONS, WHICH WE ALWAYS
KNEW WE WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH, TO THE EFFECT THAT THE U.S.
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 166400

WOULD THROUGH SUCH A STEP BE SUPPORTING OR ACQUIESCING IN
DE FACTO PARTITION. IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN FEASIBLE TO INSERT
MURPHY INTO EAST BEIRUT WHILE THE CHRISTIANS WERE IN A
PASSIVE MILITARY STANCE, BUT THEIR DETERMINATION TO ELIMI-

NATE THE PALESTINIAN ENCLAVES IN EAST BEIRUT MAKES THE PRESENT MOMENT UNPROFITIOUS. IN THIS CONNECTION, YOUR POINT IS WELL TAKEN THAT PRINCE SAUD'S SENSITIVITIES AND FEARS CONCERNING CHRISTIAN INTENTIONS TO PARTITION LEBANON MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN OUR PLANNING.

2. IN ADDITION, WE KNOW THAT SOME ELEMENTS OF THE PRESS IN BEIRUT HAVE HEARD ABOUT OUR PLAN, INCLUDING THE USE OF SECURE VOICE COMMUNICATIONS.

3. AMBASSADOR SEELYE AGREES WE SHOULD NOT ASSIGN AN OFFICER TO EAST BEIRUT FOR THE TIME BEING.

4. AMBASSADOR SEELYE, HOWEVER, HAS NOW DECIDED THAT HE MUST ACCEPT THE IMMEDIATE TRANSFER OF HIS ONE REMAINING SUBSTANTIVE FSO WITH ARABIC QUALIFICATIONS AND WITH BEIRUT EXPERIENCE, WHO HAS BEEN AT THE POST THROUGHOUT THE PROLONGED PERIOD OF HOSTILITIES. WE WOULD IN ANY CASE HAVE HAD TO PROVIDE AN OFFICER ON TDY TO FILL THE GAP UNTIL PERMANENT REPLACEMENTS FOR THE DCM AND POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF ARE FOUND AND SENT IN. MURPHY FILLS THIS BILL TO PERFECTION, AND WE THEREFORE WANT TO SEND HIM AT ONCE TO THE EMBASSY IN WEST BEIRUT AS A FIRST STEP, WITH THE EAST BEIRUT ASSIGNMENT TO BE CONSIDERED LATER.

5. THE FACT THAT HE WILL HAVE SPENT TIME IN EMBASSY BEIRUT MAY MAKE IT EASIER TO COPE WITH THE POLITICAL MISINTERPRETATIONS THAT WOULD BE MADE IF WE DECIDE TO SEND HIM LATER TO EAST BEIRUT VIA CYPRUS AND JOUNIE.

6. AMB. SEELYE BELIEVES THAT MURPHY COULD COME INTO WEST BEIRUT BY MEANS OF A FRENCH OR GERMAN RETURN CONVOY OVERLAND FROM DAMASCUS IF THE AIRPORT IN BEIRUT DOES NOT OPEN FOR COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC IN THE MEANTIME.

7. MURPHY'S ASSIGNMENT WILL BE KEPT AS BRIEF AS POSSIBLE AND WE VERY MUCH HOPE THAT IT WOULD NOT EXCEED THREE
SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 166400

MONTHS.

8. ASSUMING THE RESPONSE FROM YOU AND MURPHY IS POSITIVE, WE AND AMB. SEELYE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOU ABOUT MURPHY'S TRAVEL. KISSINGER

UNQTE
ROBINSON

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